

# FARMING SA

OCTOBER 2008  
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## KALI & LOLWANE *reap top awards*

SA'S SIX LEADING  
GRAIN PRODUCERS

### MARKETING TIPS

## Fresh produce

### Sound advice on

- Seed potatoes
- Mechanisation
- Feedlots

JAPPIE thrives  
on just 1,6ha **6**



How MILK RECORDING  
benefits **Jan Zim**

# WIN A TRACTOR



## Pros & cons of FREE TRADE

# JAPPIE

## wins big time – on just 1,6ha

**W**adea Jappie of Philippi on the Cape Flats has become a successful farmer and marketer in less than five years. But she remains modest and is quick to emphasise she and her son, Nabeel Brinkhuys, are first-generation farmers.

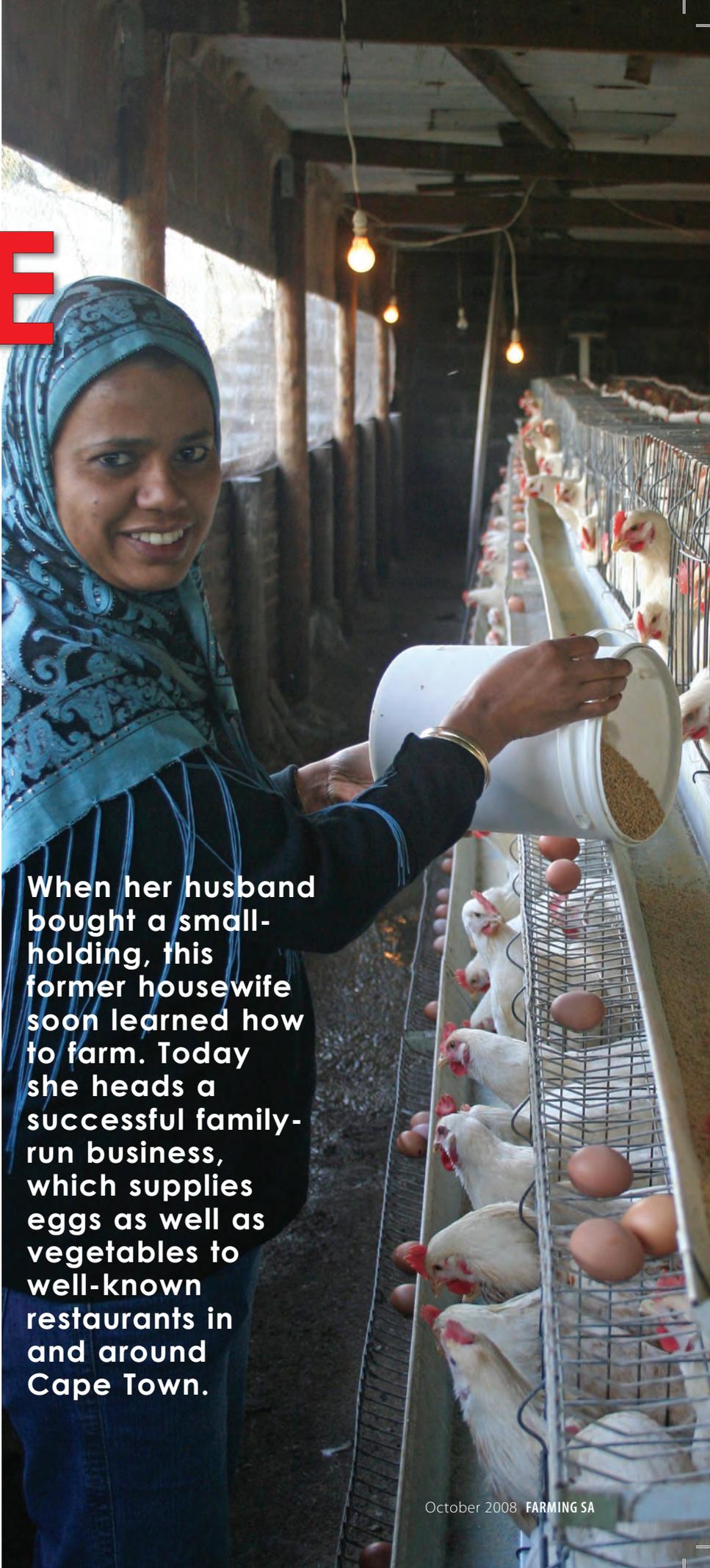
She points out that farming sometimes comes with setbacks, such as:

- the heat-wave in early March this year; and
- the recent winter storm which blew off the roof of their chicken house.

During the heat-wave Jappie lost 1 500 of her 4 000 chickens. Fortunately, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture stepped in and supplied 1 280 new chickens. During the severe storm at the end of August her husband, Achmat, who has wide experience in the building industry, and some of their labourers, came to her rescue, immediately refitting the roof.

### MARKETING

Jappie's 4 000 chickens produce an average of 3 000 eggs every day, which Brinkhuys delivers to restaurants in and around Cape Town. These include Balducci's in the city's famous Waterfront district, Mugg & Bean at Vangate Mall, Nino's at Canal Walk, Spur in Ottery and several coffee shops. They simply phoned the



**When her husband bought a small-holding, this former housewife soon learned how to farm. Today she heads a successful family-run business, which supplies eggs as well as vegetables to well-known restaurants in and around Cape Town.**

## By JACQUES CLAASSEN

restaurants and asked whether they could supply them with eggs.

The close proximity of their smallholding to Cape Town is obviously key to their successful marketing. Nevertheless, transport remains one of their biggest production costs. But Jappie and Brinkhuys, good marketers that they are, have a good relationship with all their clients. "They can phone us any time when they need eggs – even in the evening and at weekends."

### HOW DID SHE START OUT?

Jappie points out that she has five sons and a daughter and that she started a small vegetable garden for household consumption after her husband bought their 1,6ha smallholding in 2002. Says Jappie, "I started cleaning the fields just to sustain myself in the kitchen. But the vegetable garden soon became bigger."

In April 2003 Jappie bought 100 laying hens. "We use American Highlines. It was expensive to start out: at 18 weeks, a chicken cost R40 – R45. This is still the case today; but they have already had all their vaccinations and we get a certificate as proof.

"My big break came when I started supplying eggs to home industries. At that stage I bought another 400 chickens. I still supply these customers today, even though we have expanded our production to 4 000 laying hens.

### SUPPORT SYSTEM

Jappie says farming is hard work, but she encourages developing farmers not to give up. First of all, her family is her support system. Being a family business, Brinkhuys helps his mother by fulfilling the role of foreman.

And her 15-year-old son Tawfeeq, and his 14-year-old nephew Khalid, take turns to weigh, sort and package the eggs every afternoon after school.

Jappie and Brinkhuys employ four permanent workers as well as two casual workers.

"The Western Cape Department of Agriculture (DoA) also forms part of

our support system. When we expanded our vegetable and egg production, we approached them for guidance. The Department has been very helpful ever since," says Jappie.

### PRODUCING VEGETABLES

Jappie's advice to prospective vegetable producers is that one should know what to plant during the various seasons, and that nothing should be planted if the soil has not first been analysed. Their soil was tested by the Western Cape DoA. The DoA also sent them on workshops to learn more about vegetable production, fertilisers, pesticides and financial management.

In summer they plant chillies, dhanya (coriander), peppers and lettuce, followed by spinach, cabbage and turnips during winter.

They plant the salad crops for a nearby commercial farmer, Ian Grimmbach. His business, Cape Salads (also known as Dew Fresh), packages and supplies to Woolworths. He shreds the lettuce that isn't as good to look at, and sells it to restaurants.

In summer they produce 5 tons of fancy salads. Then their income from vegetables is the same as that from eggs, but during the Cape winter they get a better income from eggs. Besides, egg production is less labour intensive.

### PRODUCING EGGS

Jappie's advice to prospective egg producers is that you should:

- not allow anyone from another poultry farm to visit your farm. (This is called bio-security and prevents chicken diseases from spreading);
- limit stress inside the chicken house by restricting the movement of people and keeping to the same daily routine;
- ensure enough ventilation in the chicken house;
- always have fresh water available for the chickens;
- feed the chickens once per day (a ration of 1,2g/day);

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Wadea Jappie uses second-hand batteries (cages) for her chickens. Her son makes sure they are repaired. Every battery is fitted with a small water bowl into which fresh water drips constantly.

LEFT: Bongwiwe Kali (right), from the Ntseshe Village in Ngqamakhwe, Eastern Cape, was recently chosen Female Farmer of the Year for 2008. She was also named the Top Producer for National Markets. With her is Lulu Xingwana, Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs.



LEFT: Jan Serfontein (right), MEC for Agriculture, Conservation and Environment in North West province, is seen here with Tlamelo Mfaladi of North West, the Top Producer in the Informal Markets category in this year's Female Farmer of the Year competition.



Wadea Jappie and her son, Nabeel Brinkhuys, inspect their lettuce field. They find it difficult to produce lettuce during the rainy Cape winter, and will, in future, limit production to summer. They farm on sandy soil.

OPPOSITE: Lindeni Mbatha (left) from the Jabulani vegetable garden project in Limpopo is seen here with the award she won in the Household category. The vegetable garden was started in 1987 and has 42 members, 35 of whom are young adults. They produce organic beans, cabbage, beetroot and mealies on 10ha of land that they rent. With her is Rubben Mohlaloga, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Agriculture and Land Affairs.

# footsteps

ty leaders to ensure that land did not remain unused, and said that the opportunity exists for the land to “feed the whole world”.

Xingwana feels the young winner is able to provide the inspiration for other young

people to enter the agricultural sector.

“The average age of farmers is about 60. If we want to have a future in agriculture, we will have to encourage young people to enter the sector,” Xingwana said. 🌍

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- supply 16 hours of daylight (bright light) per day. (At night, lights should just be bright enough to see the print in a newspaper or magazine; they use a time-switch); and
- ask your customers to return the egg trays to you so that you can reuse them.

They clean the chicken house once a month and use the dung (mixed with sawdust) in the vegetable fields (in addition to the usual fertiliser). After 18 months, they sell the hens for slaughtering and get about half of what they paid for them.

## ACCOLADES

In 2006 Jappie was named Top Female Producer for Informal Markets in the Western Cape.

“Ultimately, we would like to expand our production to 10 000 laying hens. It is more lucrative to farm on a bigger scale. Besides, eggs supply us with a very stable cash flow.”

Figuratively speaking, however, it is not a good idea to put all your eggs in one basket. And that's why Jappie and Brinkhuys will continue to produce vegetables. 🌍

## DID YOU KNOW?

- During the first four weeks of production, laying hens produce small eggs.
- During the next four weeks, they produce medium-sized eggs.
- After that they lay large eggs.
- At the end of their production cycle, they sometimes lay extra-large eggs.